

## Message Text

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FOR FODAG

FOLLOWING REPEAT NAIROBI 7038 SENT ACTION SECSTATE INFO  
CAIRO OUAGADOUGOU PARIS MAY 08.  
QUOTE UNCLAS NAIROBI 7038

DEPARTMENT ALSO PASS IIA AND AFR/SFWA

PARIS PASS OECD CLUB DU SAHEL FELL

E.O. 11652:N/A

TAGS: SENV, UNEP

SUBJ: ORGANIZING MEETING OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO COMBAT  
DESERTIFICATION

REF NAIROBI 6850 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY AFTER PRELIMINARY JOCKEYING WITH WEO COUNTRY  
DELEGATIONS, UNEP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TOBLA CONCEDED FIRST  
PRIORITY OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP ORGANIZING SESSION (MAY 2-5)  
WAS TO REACH CONSENSUS AGREEMENT ON CG'S TERMS OF REFERENCE  
(TOR). TOR AGREED TO ON EVENING MAY 5, THOUGH NO GOVERNMENT  
OR MULTILATERAL ORGANIZATION MADE EVEN TENTATIVE COMMITMENT TO  
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ASSIST ANY OF SIX TRANSNATIONAL PROJECTS PRESENTED  
ON PILOT BASIS. STILL PILOT REVIEW OF THESE PROJECTS  
MAY 3 AND 4 PROBABLY PERSUADED UNEP LEADERSHIP THAT QUALITY  
AND SUBSTANTIVE CONTENT NEEDED CONSIDERABLE IMPROVEMENT  
USDEL BELIEVES CONSULTATIVE GROUP COULD MAKE EFFECTIVE  
CONTRIBUTION TO IMPLEMENTING ANTI-DESERTIFICATION PLAN  
OF ACTION. BUT CG MUST EFFECTIVELY IDENTIFY EXISTING ANTI-

DESERTIFICATION PROGRAMS AND RESOURCES. CG ALSO SHOULD SUPPORT LIMITED NUMBER OF NEW INTERVENTIONS, PARTICULARLY IN RESEARCH, IN MOST SELECTIVE AND INNOVATIVE MANNER. END SUMMARY.

2. FOUR-DAY MEETING TO ESTABLISH TOR AND REVIEW TRANSNATIONAL PROJECTS ON PILOT BASIS COMPLETED LATE EVENING OF MAY 5. CLEARLY SESSION WAS SCHEDULED PREMATURELY AND SUFFERED FROM VARIOUS PROBLEMS, I.E.: A) LATENT OPPOSITION FROM CERTAIN WEO COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY SWEDEN, UK, CANADA, AND, AT END, FRG; AND B) INABILITY OF PARTICULAR GOVERNMENTS TO REVIEW TRANSNATIONAL PROJECTS OFFICIALLY IN THEIR CAPITALS DUE TO UNEP TARDINESS IN DISTRIBUTING REVISIONS. WITHIN THESE CONSTRAINTS WHICH WERE CONSIDERABLE, USDEL BELIEVES THERE IS BASIS FOR (A) LAUNCHING THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP, (B) PROBABLY SECURING BROAD PARTICIPATION FROM AMONG IMPORTANT BILATERAL AND MULTI-LATERAL DONORS AND (C) CONTINUING SUPPORT FROM A SURPRISINGLY LARGE CLUSTER OF UN AGENCIES. EXDIR TOLBA PREDICTS HE WILL WIN SUPPORT OF FAO, IFAD AND WORLD BANK AS COSPONSORING AGENCIES AND CORRIDOR JUDGEMENT IS THAT HE WILL DELIVER THEM IN DUE COURSE. USDEL HAS ITS DOUBTS THAT TOLBA WILL BE ABLE TO PERSUADE FAO'S SAOUMA TO BECOME COSPONSOR.

3. INITIALLY UNEP SECRETARIAT SEEMED HESITANT TO MODIFY FUNCTIONS, SCOPE OF WORK AND ORGANIZATION PROPOSED MAY 2  
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AT OPENING MEETING. THROUGH WEO PUBLIC AND PRIVATE INTERVENTIONS, LATE MAY 4 EVENING SESSION REACHED GENERAL CONSENSUS ON REVISED TOR. TOLBA'S CENTRAL THESIS WAS THAT HE MUST FULFIL THE MANDATE GIVEN TO HIM BY RESOLUTION 32/172 OF DECEMBER 19, 1977. OPERATIVE PARAGRAPH 10 OF THIS RESOLUTION AUTHORIZES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO CONVENE EARLY SESSION OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO ASSIST IN MOBILIZING RESOURCES TO COMBAT DESERTIFICATION. WEO INSISTED UPON AND GAINED AGREEMENT THAT CONSULTATIVE GROUP WOULD ALSO "IDENTIFY EXISTING RESOURCES FOR COMBATING DESERTIFICATION AND STIMULATE COORDINATION BETWEEN GOVERNMENTS AND INSTITUTIONS CONCERNED." UE DEL ALSO ACHIEVED LIMITATION OF SIZE OF GROUP TO APPROXIMATELY 20 PLUS 8 OR 10 CO-SPONSORING AGENCIES. LASTLY, GC VI WILL HAVE FULL AUTHORITY TO REVIEW FUNCTIONS, SCOPE OF WORK AND ORGANIZATION OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP SINCE WEO'S INSISTED THAT TOR POLICY STATEMENT BE PRESENTED TO GC VI AS ADDENDUM TO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT.

4. SIX TRANSNATIONAL PROJECTS WERE HASTILY PRESENTED TO A RELUCTANT GROUP OF DONOR DELEGATIONS. CHAIRMAN TOLBA WAS EXPOSED TO A WIDE RANGE OF PROJECT CRITICISMS WHICH COULD

BE BRIEFLY SUMMARIZED AS FOLLOWS:

A. NONE OF THE PROJECT PROPOSALS HAD ADEQUATE TREATMENT OF BENEFITS AND COSTS AND HAD FINESSED THE ISSUE BY INDICATING THEY WERE REGIONAL IN NATURE.

B. THE SOCIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS OF ANTI-DESERTIFICATION PROJECGS ARE CRITICAL AND WERE POORLY TREATED, WITH NO REFERENCE TO GROWING POPULATION PRESSURE ON MARGINAL SEMI-ARID LANDS.

C. THE PROJECT PROPOSALS' ORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS WERE QUESTIONED IN MOST INSTANCES AND NEEDED FURTHER REFINEMENT; FOR EXAMPLE THE SOLAR INTEGRATED LIVESTOCK UNCLASSIFIED

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PROJECT FOR SAHEL AND SUDAN PROPOSED A 4.5 MILLION DOLLAR TASK FORCE COMPONENT OF NINE EXPERTS FOR FIVE YEARS. THIS TAKS FORCE WAS NOT DESIRED BY CILSS AND NOT CONSIDERED IMPERATIVE BY MINISTER ABDULLA OF SUDAN; HASTILY CONVENED WORKING GROUP OF UNEP/CILSS/SUDAN ELIMINATED TASK FORCE PROPOSAL ON THE SPORT;

D. PROJECTS APPEARED TRADITIONAL IN NATURE AND LACKED INNOVATION AND IMAGINATION. IF CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY, CHAIRMAN TOLBA WAS TOLD THAT AGENDA OF MEETING SHOULD BE CIRCULATED MINIMUM OF THREE MONTHS BEFORE NEXT SESSION, INCLUDING PROJECT PROPOSALS, IF ANY, DEVELOPED WITH FAR GREATER PROFESSIONAL QUALITY THAN THOSE PRESENTED TO THIS ESSION. HE WAS FURTHER INFORMED THAT THE ADEQUATE REVIEW OF A PROPOSAL REQUIRES THE BETTER PART OF A DAY AND THAT HIS TRIAL EXPERIMENT WITH PROJECT REVIEW WAS FAR TOO RUSHED.

5. NO LEAR AGREEMENT REACHED ON HOW UNEP WILL IDENTIFY EXISTING RESOURCES FOCUSSED ON ANTI-DESERTIFICATION PROGRAMS, US DELEGATION STATED THIS ESSENTIAL IF CONSULTATIVE GROUP TO FOLLOW BROAD MOBILIZATION OF RESOURCES BY EXISTING DONORS ALREADY UNDERWAY IN SUPPORT OF THE ANTI-DESERTIFICATION PLAN OF ACTION. CHAIRMAN TOLBA ALSO SEEMS UNCERTAIN OF UNEP'S POSSIBLE LONG-TERM SUPPORT FOR ANTI-DESERTIFICATION RESEARCH AND TRAINING, ALTHOUGH SUCH A PROPOSAL MAY BE DEVELOPED FOR FUTURE SESSION OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP. HERE THE ROLE OF THE CONSULTATIVE GROUP FOR INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH COULD PROVE VITAL PROTOTYPE. SUCH AN APPROACH WOULD PERMIT UNEP'S

CG TO SUPPORT VISIONARY AND FOCUSED RESEARCH IN TWO OR THREE SELECT RESEARCH STATIONS ON PIONEERING MEANS OF UNCLASSIFIED

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COMBATting DESERTIFICATION. OVER PAST 30 YEARS, UNIVER-  
SITIES, INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS  
AS WELL AS UNESCO AND FAO HAVE COLLECTED NIAGARA OF DATA  
BUT CG TOLD IT NEEDS CONSOLIDATION AND PRAGMATIC RESEARCH  
FCUS.

6. US DELEGATION USED SAHEL GREENBELT AND SAHEL SOLAR  
PROJECTS TO ILLUSTRATE POSSIBLE ROLE IT COULD PLAY WERE  
IT TO BECOME MEMBER OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP. LIKE OTHER  
WEO DONORS, US ASSISTANCE EXTENDED ON BILATERAL BASIS.  
US DEL UNDERSCORED EFFECTIVENESS OF CLUB DU SAHEL AND  
CILSS ORGANIZATION ALREADY EQUIPPED  
TO COORDINATE THESE TWO PROJECTS WITHIN SAHEL AND SUPPORTED  
CILSS' IDRISSE'S ARTICULATE OPPOSITION TO ANY LARGER UNSO  
SAHELIAN-SUDANO COORDINATION ROLE. CILSS' COORDINATION  
WITH SUDAN COULD BE CARRIED OUT THROUGH PROPOSED PERIODIC  
MEETINGS OF A REGIONAL CONSULTATION COMMITTEE AND AN ADVIS-  
ORY TECHNICAL COMMITTEE. USDEL CONFIRMED THAT BOTH PRO-  
POSALS, WHEN REVISED, WOULD BE SUBMITTED TO AFR/SFWA AND  
AFR/EA FOR THEIR REVIEW AND ONWARD TRANSMISSION TO FIELD  
MISSIONS. US ALONG WITH MOST OTHER WEO DELEGATIONS MADE  
ONLY TECHNICAL COMMENTS ON WAY THE OTHER PROJECT PRO-  
POSALS COULD BE IMPROVED IN FUTURE. IT IS PRESUMED THAT  
ALL SIX PROPOSALS WILL UNDERGO SUBSTANTIAL REVISION RESULT-  
ING FROM CONSULTATIVE GROUP REVIEW.

7. US DELEGATION TO GC VI WILL BE PRESSURED BY EXDIR TOLBA  
FOR USG TO BECOME EARLY MEMBER OF CONSULTATIVE GROUP.  
BELIEVE USG SHOULD GIVE MEMBERSHIP QUESTION CAREFUL CON-  
SIDERATION AND AGREE FIRST AS TO HOW USG COULD MAKE EFFECTIVE  
CONTRIBUTION WITHIN TERMS OF REFERENCE NEGOTIATED THESE  
PAST FOUR DAYS. USDEL INDICATED TOLBA'S MAY 15 DEADLINE  
FOR JOINING CONSULTATIVE GROUP WAS VERY TIGHT AND MIGHT  
PROVE DIFFICULT FOR USG TO MEET.  
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